

**Report of Deputies  
for Revision of Synod Rules  
to FRCSA Synod 2017,  
Soshanguve**

# Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>		<b>Page</b>
1.	General	3
	1.1. Deputies	3
	1.2. Mandate	3
2.	Recommendations	3
3.	Reporting	3
4.	Annexures	7
	4.1. Ann. 1: Proposed revised Rules of Synod for the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa.	7
	4.2. Ann. 2: Interim Report by Deputies for Revision of Synod rules to Indaba 2016.	15

## **1. General**

Deputies for Revision of Synod rules herewith submit their report to Synod Soshanguve, 2017.

### **1.1 Deputies**

Synod Pretoria, 2014, appointed brs. C. Roose (convener) and E. Byker as Deputies for Revision of Synod rules.

### **1.2 Mandate as decided by Synod Bethal, 2014 (Art. 39, point 4, Acts of Synod 2014).**

- a. To revise the proposed Rules of Synod.
- b. To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held end 2015 or beginning 2016.
- c. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to Article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. To adopt the newly proposed Rules of Synod.
- 2.2. To mandate the Stated Clerk to finalise the text of the new Rules of Synod in English and Afrikaans according to the decisions by Synod 2017.
- 2.3. To mandate the Stated Clerk to merge the newly adopted Rules of Synod with the revised version of the Church Order, as adopted by Synod 2008 and the final version of the Rules for Relations with Sister churches as adopted by Synod 2014, and to publish it in a suitable form.
- 2.4. To discharge Deputies for Revision of Synod rules.

## **3. Reporting**

### **3.1. Background information**

Synod Pretoria of 2011 mandated Deputies Stated Clerk and Archive (DSC&A) as follows, regarding revision of Synod rules (Art. 31, points 1 – 3 of the deputies mandate, Acts of Synod 2011):

1. to include the current Rules of Synod as an appendix in the acts;
2. to serve the next synod with a proposal regarding revised Rules of Synod;
3. to re-formulate article 2 of Rules of Synod in order to make provision for foreign delegates which are not elders or ministers, by formulating the status of advisors in such a way that it is in line with Scriptural teachings concerning the functioning of females and non-office bearers in the church.

DSC&A submitted a report to Synod 2014 in which all the points of their mandate were addressed.

Synod 2014 however did not accept the proposed revised Rules of Synod, mainly because they did not agree with the proposed time schedule for preparation of synod by convening churches and decided to appoint a new deputyship with the mandate as indicated above under 1.2.

In that process however, the proposals in the report of DSC&A to Synod 2014, regarding point 3 of their mandate, were not discussed at all and Synod 2014 did not make any decisions regarding that matter.

As Synod 2011 regarded that issue as important enough to request a report, dealing with this matter, for discussion and decisions by synods, your present deputies suggest that Synod 2017 reconsiders the necessity of more clarity on this issue and act according to it.

Regarding this issue your deputies would like to refer to the Report of Deputies Stated Clerk and Archive as submitted to Synod 2014, point 2.10: “Reformulation of Article 2 of Rules of Synod”. (Acts of Synod 2014, page 312 vv)

### **3.2. Execution of mandate**

#### **3.2.1. To revise the proposed Rules of Synod.**

Deputies revised the proposed Rules of Synod as submitted to Synod 2014, according to the comments and recommendations by that synod. The revised version was submitted in an interim report to Indaba 2016 for discussion. For results of the discussion the reader is referred to point 3.2.2. below.

Your deputies are still of the opinion that a period of four (4) months for submission of deputy reports is excessive, but they realised on the other hand that a period of one (1) month for submission of agenda points by classes and church councils, as stipulated by the current Rules of Synod, is extremely short and also somewhat contradictory to the rule that an agenda should be sent two months before the synod starts.

Deputies therefore decided to submit a revised version of proposed Rules of Synod in which two options (black or red text), regarding the **time schedule for the actions of the convening church**, are given (newly proposed Articles 2 and 10). By using this method, synod may be able to conclude this matter by simply deciding to adopt their preferred time schedule.

Deputies also propose to replace phrases such as: “**churches with which we correspond**” (proposed articles 3 and 11) with: “**churches with which the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa have official sister church relations**”. This proposal is based on the reasoning that the phrase: “with which we correspond” can have different meanings and apart from that, is an informal way of referring to church relations which does not belong in a formal document.

Deputies realised that our compliance with **Article 19 of the FRCSA Church Order** was always visible as every synod appointed deputies for that purpose. Synod 2014 however decided to merge deputies Art. 19 CO with Deputies Curators for Theological Training (Art. 33 point 1 and Art. 34, point 6, Acts of 2014). As a result of that decision the visible compliance by our churches with Art. 19 CO has disappeared. In order to reflect our continued compliance with Art. 19 CO, your deputies propose to change the name of Deputies Curators for Theological Training in the newly proposed Rules of Synod, Article 4, point 4.10.5. **to Deputies Curators for Theological Training and Article 19 CO.**

Deputies also propose to make more use of the FRCSA web site for publication and distribution of relevant synodical documents and inserted an additional regulation for that purpose in Article 2, point 2.1.2.2 of the newly proposed Rules of Synod.

The latest English version of newly proposed Rules of Synod is attached to this report as Annexure 1.

Your deputies propose that Synod 2017 mandates the Stated Clerk to finalise the English version of the Rules of Synod after synod has approved a final version of it and to create an Afrikaans translation of that final English version.

**Deputies therefore recommend:**

- 3.2.1.1. To adopt the newly proposed Rules of Synod.
- Grounds:
1. The current Rules of Synod document do not reflect the amendments made to it since the synod of 2005.
  2. An up to date version of approved Rules of Synod is necessary as a guide for the churches.
  3. The newly proposed Rules of Synod provide more detailed and clearer description of certain items.
- 3.2.1.2. To mandate the Stated Clerk to finalise the text of the new Rules of Synod according to the final decisions by Synod 2017 in English and Afrikaans.
- Grounds:
1. Minor changes to the text of the proposed Rules of Synod should not prevent a speedy publishing of the Rules of Synod.
  2. The Stated Clerk is in the best position to finalise this matter.
- 3.2.1.3. To mandate the Stated Clerk to merge the newly adopted Rules of Synod with the final version of the Rules for Relations with Sister Churches as adopted by Synod 2014 and the revised version of the Church Order in English and Afrikaans as adopted by Synod 2008 and to publish it in a suitable form.
- Ground:
1. The FRCSA needs an updated version of the indicated documents for use by the churches.
- 3.2.1.4. To discharge Deputies for Revision of Synod rules.
- Ground:
1. Deputies have completed their tasks.
- 3.2.2. To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held end 2015 or beginning 2016.**

Deputies submitted an interim report to Indaba 2016 for discussion. The report was presented by br. Roose. The majority of the delegates preferred a 3 months period before commencement of synods for deputies to submit their reports in stead of

the 4 months, as instructed in the present Rules of Synod, but not all the delegates agreed with that suggestion.

It was also suggested that, to prescribe a certain period of time for submission of reports, is one thing, but compliance with such rules is far more important. It was therefore suggested that reports, submitted after the due date, should as a rule, not be accepted by synods.

Another suggestion was that the rule, that changes in membership of deputyships should be reported to classes for approval, is somewhat illogical, as sinodical deputies should report to synods. It was therefore suggested that this rule should be changed accordingly. Your deputies therefore propose an alternative to the presently valid text in Article 10 of the newly proposed Rules of Synod as attached hereto as Annexure 1.

A final suggestion was that reporting changes in deputyship members should also be reported to the Stated Clerk and that this should be included in the Rules of Synod.

The interim report is attached to this report as Annexure 2.

**3.2.3. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to Article 11 of the Rules of Synod.**

Deputies herewith submit their report to Synod Soshanguve, 2017.

Date of Report: 4th April 2017



.....  
C. Roose



.....  
E. Byker

## Annexures

### Annexure 1:

#### Proposed revised Rules of Synod for the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa.

## SYNOD RULES OF THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES IN SOUTH AFRICA

### Article 1      Synod schedule

- 1.1. Synod will be convened every three years by the church appointed at the last synod to organise the date and meeting place for such synod.
- 1.2. In the event of a pressing issue requiring immediate attention, for which reason at least one classis requests an extra-ordinary synod, the convening church shall, in consultation with the other churches, convene a synod.

### Article 2      Duties of the convening church

The convening church:

- 2.1. shall prepare the synod in co-operation with the appointed Stated Clerk and shall conduct the following actions according to the indicated schedule:
  - 2.1.1. at least six (6) months before commencement of synod:
    - 2.1.1.1. invite the churches to submit any new items of business for inclusion on the provisional draft agenda, according to Article 30 of the Church Order. Such items should reach the convening church no later than two (2) months before the synod commences;
    - 2.1.1.2. request the classes to submit items to be placed on the provisional draft agenda. These items should reach the convening church no later than two (2) months before commencement of synod. Synod may decide to accept in exceptional circumstances items not sent in time;
    - 2.1.1.3. inform the secretaries of Deputies for Contacts with Churches Abroad and Deputies for Contacts with Churches in South Africa about the scheduled meeting dates of synod.
    - 2.1.1.4. request deputies to submit their reports in the prescribed format, which should reach the convening church at least four (4) months (**alternative: three (3) months**) before commencement of synod.
  - 2.1.2. at least two (2) months before commencement of synod:
    - 2.1.2.1. provide a provisional draft agenda and forward one electronic copy to each church and one electronic copy to the secretary of the Deputies for Contact with Churches Abroad. This agenda shall be accompanied by one electronic copy of all the relevant information;
    - 2.1.2.2. send all the relevant documents to the church councils, synod delegates appointed by the classes and any other officially appointed delegates and all the non-confidential documents to the administrator of the FRCSA web site for immediate publication on that web site;
    - 2.1.2.3. prepare a time schedule for the synod meetings.
  - 2.1.3. at least one (1) month before commencement of synod:
    - 2.1.3.1. place a notice of the forthcoming synod as well as the provisional agenda in the local newsletters or other regular publications of all the churches in the federation of the FRCSA;

- 2.2. shall, in accordance with article 3 and upon proposals by deputies, request possible advisors to attend synod;
- 2.3. shall give timeous notice to any deputies whose presence may be required at synod;
- 2.4. shall report on the examination of delegates credentials and oversee the signing of the attendance register prior to constitution of synod;
- 2.5. shall convene a prayer-meeting before the commencement of synod to ask for God's blessing on the work of the Synod.

### **Article 3      Members of Synod**

The synod shall be comprised of legitimate delegates from the classes. They shall, according to article 32 of the Church Order, present their credentials which shall bind them to the Holy Scriptures, the Three Forms of Unity and the Church Order.

Each classis shall be represented by three ministers and three elders. In case three ministers cannot be delegated because of vacancies or legitimate hindrances, more elders can be delegated. Should a deacon take the place of an elder in the delegation, the synod shall decide whether he has voting rights.

All ministers and missionaries of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa, not delegated to synod, may be present at synod, where they can act as advisors upon invitation by the chairman.

Official delegates from churches with which the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa have official sister church relations), may also be admitted as advisors upon invitation.

### **Article 4      The agenda**

The following items of business shall appear on every agenda

- 4.1. Opening by the Convening Church
- 4.2. Signing of Attendance Register, Examination of Credentials and Report of Findings
- 4.3. Election of Officers and Constitution of Synod
- 4.4. Delegates agreement with the Three Forms of Unity
- 4.5. Adoption of the Agenda
- 4.6. Adoption of Meeting Procedures
- 4.7. Correspondence received by the convening church
- 4.8. Instructions from classes
- 4.9. Proposals from classes
- 4.10. Reports by:
  - 4.10.1. Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad
  - 4.10.2. Deputies for Contact with Churches in South Africa
  - 4.10.3. Mission Deputies
  - 4.10.4. Deputies for Correspondence with the Government
  - 4.10.5. Deputies Curators for Theological Training and Art. 19 CO
  - 4.10.6. Deputies Article 11 of the Church Order (Needy Churches)
  - 4.10.7. Deputies Article 49 of the Church Order
  - 4.10.8. The Synod Treasury



- 4.10.9. Deputies for inspection of the Treasury
- 4.10.10. Stated Clerk & Archives
- 4.10.11. Deputies for Inspection of the Archives
- 4.10.12. Any other deputies as appointed by the previous synod
- 4.11. Appointment of Deputies, Archive Church and Classis for days of prayer ad article 69 CO
- 4.12. Benedictory greetings to the President
- 4.13. Questions according to article 41, paragraph 2, of the Church Order
- 4.14. Personal questions
- 4.15. Appointment of the convening church, and place and time of the next synod
- 4.16. Adoption of the Acts of Synod and the Press Release
- 4.17. Censure according to Article 48 of the Church Order
- 4.18. Closing of Synod

Proposals and amendments which were not delivered to the convening church in time (see articles 2.1.1.1. and 2.1.1.2.) shall not be taken into consideration by the synod, except by special resolution.

## **Article 5      Officers of Synod**

The opening of synod will be conducted by an office bearer on behalf of the convening church. After a report on the credentials of the delegates, the election of the officers of synod shall take place and synod shall be constituted.

The three officers of synod are: the chairman, the vice chairman and the clerk.

Officers of synod are chosen by election, according to the rules as described in Article 9.

### ***The Chairman***

The chairman shall see to it that business is transacted in the proper order and is expedited as much as possible, and that members observe the rules of order and decorum, according to Article 34 of the Church Order.

He shall place before Synod every motion that is made and seconded, in accord with the accepted order; and he shall clearly state every question before a vote is taken, so that every member may know on what he is voting.

If the chairman feels the need to speak on a pending question, he shall relinquish the chair to the vice-chairman for that period of time.

He shall have, and duly exercise, the prerogative of declaring a motion or a person out of order. If his ruling is challenged, it shall be submitted to Synod for decision by majority vote.

### ***The Vice-Chairman***

The vice-chairman shall, in the absence of the chairman, assume all his duties and privileges.

The vice-chairman shall render all possible assistance to the chairman as circumstances require.

He shall prepare the Press Release, which shall be approved by the Officers of Synod prior to its publication in a suitable publication.

### ***The Clerk***

The clerk shall be responsible for the preparation of the Acts of Synod. These will as far as possible be finalised during the meeting. He shall also bear responsibility for any correspondence from the synod, and at the conclusion of synod arrange for all synod documents together with an index to be included in the Archives.

## **Article 6      Visitors to synod**

1. Synod is open to all members of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa.
2. Synod shall decide on the admission of non-members

## **Article 7      Closed sessions of Synod**

A closed session shall be used in delicate or unusual situations and when personal matters are discussed. The chairman, in consultation with the other officers of synod, will decide on closed sessions.

A closed session shall, as a rule, mean a session where members of Synod and the stated clerk only may be present. Synod may invite other persons to attend closed sessions when deemed necessary.

## **Article 8      Correspondence from Synod**

Correspondence from the Synod to persons or consistories or other committees within the bond of churches shall be signed and handled by the clerk.

Official correspondence to persons or institutions outside the bond of churches shall be signed by the Officers of Synod.

Copies of such correspondence shall be kept in the archive.

## **Article 9      Rules for Decision making and Voting**

Decisions will be formulated as follows: Material – Decision – Grounds.

Wherever possible decisions shall be made with common consent. Should a proposal, motion or amendment be put to the vote, a majority of votes shall be required before the proposal, motion or amendment is carried.

It is in the freedom of the chair to determine how the vote is to be taken: by calling the roll (in any order) or by show of hands.

Should the voting result in a tie, the proposal, motion or amendment shall be rejected, and where this occurs when examining a candidate, he will fail.

In the final count no blank votes or abstentions shall be considered, they are invalid.

Voting about persons shall be by ballot. An outright majority of votes must be obtained. Blank votes are not valid and shall not be counted in determining a majority. This rule applies to the election of any person(s).

Synod may appoint delegates, deputies, or office bearers by consensus. If there is no consensus, appointments will be made by voting, using the following procedure:

- 9.1. By casting a free ballot.
- 9.2. Should there be more than two candidates from which to choose and no majority vote is reached a second free ballot shall take place.
- 9.3. If there is no result after two free ballots, any subsequent choice shall be restricted to the candidates who received the most votes in the previous ballot, with this proviso, that there shall be twice the number of nominations as is required to fill the positions.
- 9.4. Should this ballot reveal no clear majority the oldest person or persons shall be appointed. The chairman, in consultation with Synod, may rule that any matter be decided by ballot.

## **Article 10      Deputies**

To assist Synod in the execution of their decisions, Synod shall appoint churches or classes or persons as Deputies with specific mandates.

Duties shall be divided as equally as possible. Deputies shall preferably not be appointed for more than three subsequent periods in the same deputyship.

In case of deputyships with a limited number of members, sufficient alternate members are to be appointed to ensure proper functioning of the deputies.

In cases where the functioning of deputies is hampered by a loss of members and non-availability of alternate members, deputies have the authority to co-opt additional members in order to fulfil their mandate. Such appointments should be mentioned and justified in their report to the next synod.)

Such changes in membership are also to be reported to the Stated Clerk.

Deputies are mandated to consult advisers as required. Such consultations shall be mentioned in the report to Synod. Such advisers shall not be allowed to partake in discussion at Synod, unless so instructed by the chairman. Deputies shall make proposals to the convening church regarding invitations of advisors to attend synod, which they deem necessary.

The mandate to deputies shall be in effect from one synod to the next.

Deputies shall submit a written report of their activities at the following synod. Such reports are to be sent to the convening church at least four (4) months (alternative: three (3) months) prior to the commencement of synod and shall contain the information and be in the format as indicated in the Appendix hereto.

Execution of decisions for which no deputies have been appointed shall be the responsibility of the Officers of Synod.

## **Article 11      Instructions to Deputies**

Each synod shall determine its mandate for respective deputyships.

Apart from any specific instructions the following general instructions shall apply:

11.1. Deputies for Contact with Churches Abroad:

- 11.1.1. shall consist of five members, from which a secretary and chairman shall be appointed;
- 11.1.2. shall send the Acts of Synod, the provisional agenda for the synod and the Report by Deputies for Contact with Churches Abroad to the deputies of churches with whom the FRCSA have official sister church relations);
- 11.1.3. shall send letters of greetings on behalf of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa, to the synods of churches with whom the FRCSA have official sister church relations);
- 11.1.4. shall supply attestations for ministers of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa who wish to lead services in one of the churches with whom the FRCSA have official sister church relations);
- 11.1.5. shall maintain correspondence with sister churches according to the adopted rules (Art. 25, point 2.1., Acts of FRCSA Synod 2014);
- 11.1.6. shall report on decisions taken by synods of the churches with whom the FRCSA have official sister church relations);
- 11.1.7. shall deliver any correspondence with, and Acts of Synod from, the churches with whom the FRCSA have official sister church relations); to deputies responsible for the care and maintenance of the Archives;

- 11.2. Deputies for Contact with Churches in South Africa.
- 11.2.1. shall consist of five members, from which a secretary and a chairman shall be appointed and two alternate members;
- 11.2.2. shall formulate proposals to synod with regard to exercising contact with churches in South Africa;
- 11.2.3. shall deliver finalised correspondence and documents to deputies responsible for the care and maintenance of the Archives.
- 11.3. Deputies for Correspondence with Government:
- 11.3.1. shall consist of three members, from which a secretary and chairman shall be appointed, and one alternate member;
- 11.3.2. shall by means of proposals and draft letters equip synod to fulfil her duty in co-operating with government, and in certain circumstances, to witness to them as the Church of Christ;
- 11.3.3. shall deliver finalised correspondence and documents to deputies responsible for the care and maintenance of the Archives.
- 11.4. Synod Treasurer:
- 11.4.1. is responsible for the control of synod income and expenses;
- 11.4.2. shall keep books of account where all income and expenses will be shown;
- 11.4.3. shall reimburse any expenses incurred in the execution of a synod mandate and for which a specified account has been rendered;
- 11.4.4. shall prepare a financial report documenting income and expenditure and a balance statement for scrutiny and audit by synod;
- 11.4.5. shall arrange that the appointed deputies annually audit the abovementioned financial statements and present a report of their findings to the synod;
- 11.4.6. shall propose detailed congregational contributions for the period until the next synod and ensure that the congregational contributions to the church federation as approved by the latest synod are timely payed.
- 11.5. Stated Clerk and Archive:
- 11.5.1. shall run, upon instruction from the synod or the convening church, the administration of the synod;
- 11.5.2. shall assist the convening church to prepare the synod;
- 11.5.3. shall record decisions and make minutes during the synod meetings and assist the elected synod clerk in compilation of the Acts of synod. The Stated Clerk may be present during closed sessions, the minutes of which he will deal with in a confidential manner;
- 11.5.4. shall act as the archivist in collaboration with the archive church;
- 11.5.5. shall offer surplus Acts of Synod for sale against cost price to those who are interested;
- 11.5.6. shall request deputies ad article 49 CO to submit their reports of a visit to a classis immediately after that visit;
- 11.5.7. shall request information from appointed deputies on the progress of their mandates during the inter-synodical period of time;
- 11.5.8. shall request the various deputies to submit their report in English, except those deputies who deal with mainly Afrikaans issues. Those deputies, who report in Afrikaans, are requested to submit with their report an English summary;
- 11.5.9. shall arrange publication of the acts as follows (Acts of Synod 2008, art,16):
- 11.5.9.1. the complete acts with appendices will be printed in limited numbers for distribution to consistories, archives, libraries and deputies;
- 11.5.9.2. the complete acts with appendices will be made available electronically for those who are interested;
- 11.5.9.3. shall ensure that legal requirements are met with regard to the distribution of copies of the Acts of Synod to public institutions.

11.6. Church in Charge of the Archives:

11.6.1. shall in co-operation with the appointed Stated Clerk take care of the Archives;

11.6.2. shall ensure that the appointed archivist maintains the Archives in such a way that they are complete and accessible.

The following documents shall be kept in the Archives:

- The Acts of Synod
- The Acts of Synod of churches with whom the FRCSA have official sister church relations).
- Reports and letters of all deputyships
- All incoming documents to have reached synod
- Copies of letters that synod has sent

The Archive must be inspected prior to each synod by deputies appointed by the previous synod for that purpose.

## **Article 12      Amendment of Synod Rules**

Amendment of these rules may only take place if a proposal to this effect, is placed on the synod agenda by a classis, or if it is recommended by deputies appointed by synod for this purpose.

**Authorized by the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa of Soshanguve on .... August 2017.**

..... chairman

..... clerk

..... vice chairman

## Appendix: Proposed Report Template

Report of Deputies to Synod .....

---

Name of Deputyship

Date of Report

Version (e.g. Majority report, minority report, sequence number if more than one report).

Date and Place of mandating Synod.

Date and Place of proposed receiving Synod.

Mandate (quote the reference and full text, from the Acts of Synod appointing the Deputies)

Recommendations (no motivation here, that comes later, under Detailed Report). These should be on a form that could be used in Acts of Synod.

Membership (include resignations, co-options, reasons for membership changes)

Summary of activities and methods employed; include members' roles.

Detailed Report (by mandate, describing the process of reaching a conclusion, give supporting arguments)

- Material
- Decision
- Grounds.

Signatures of deputies and co-optees.

Annexures (Supporting documents; if mandate includes proposing any texts, these would also come here.) Annexures must be cross referenced to the report.

---

## Annexure 2:

# Interim Report of Deputies for revision of Synod rules to Indaba 2016

## Members of deputyship

Synod 2014 of the FRCSA appointed the brothers E. Byker and C. Roose as deputies.

## Summary of instructions and decisions by Synod 2014

**Note: Decisions and instructions by Synod 2014 can only be properly understood against the background of the following history.**

- **Synod 2011 appointed deputies with the mandate to propose revised synod rules to Synod 2014 (Acts of the FRCSA Synod 2011, Art. 31).**
- **Deputies submitted a report to Synod 2014 in which newly revised synod rules were proposed (Acts of the FRCSA Synod 2014, Art. 39 & App. 25).**

Synod 2014 decided:

1. Not to adopt the newly proposed Rules of Synod yet.  
Grounds: The proposed Rules of Synod still need some revision.
3. That the minimum period for submitting deputies' reports should at least be four months before a synod commences.  
Ground: Delegates to synods and church councils should be given enough time to study the reports.
4. To appoint a new deputyship with the following mandate:
  - a. To revise the proposed Rules of Synod.
  - b. To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held end 2015 or beginning 2016.
  - c. To report to the next synod according to Article 11 of the Rules of Synod.  
Grounds:
    - i. The proposed time schedule is not acceptable.
    - ii. The rules for closed sessions should be formulated in a separate article.
    - iii. The term 'unanimous' should be replaced by 'with common consent'.
    - iv. Rules for the format of deputies' reports should be described more precisely to promote consistency.

## Report on activities regarding synodical instructions

1. A revised "Rules of Synod" document was created by deputies, based on the Report of deputies to Synod 2014. A copy of the newest proposed "Rules of Synod" is attached to this document. Deputies refer to the "Report of Stated Clerk, Archive and Revision of Synod Rules" as submitted to Synod 2014 (Acts of Synod 2014, App. 25), for arguments regarding proposed amendments in the "Rules of Synod".
2. Deputies changed the issues related to the time schedules back to the schedule as prescribed in the Rules of Synod as adopted in 2008, which is more or less

according to the preferences as indicated by Synod 2014 (4.c. Ground i above), but are still of the opinion that those time schedules are unrealistic. This point is therefore listed as a discussion point for Indaba 2016.

3. Deputies formulated the rules for closed sessions as a separate article in the newly proposed document (4.c. Ground ii above); the term ‘unanimous’ was replaced by “with common consent” as prescribed by Synod 2014 (4.c. Ground iii above) and a proposed template for deputies’ reports (4.c. Ground iv above) was created and attached as an appendix to the proposed “Rules of Synod”.

### **Proposed discussion points for Indaba meeting**

1. Regarding Synod (2014) decided 3, deputies consider that the “Ground” as such is valid, but “enough time” is not necessarily equal to “at least four months”.
2. Deputies realised that the prescribed rule for handling changes in membership of deputyships, as appointed by Synod, in art. 10, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph, is not logical. “Reporting to classis for approval” does not make sense as the deputies may be spread over two classes and deputies received their instructions not from any of those classes, but from Synod. Deputies therefore suggest that changes of membership of deputies should therefore be reported and justified to the next synod. In order to promote communication, your deputies suggest that the synodical administrator should however be notified of any change in deputyships.

Deputies intend to prepare a final version of the proposed Rules of Synod in English and Afrikaans after the discussions during the Indaba, for submission to the next synod.

### **Appendix: Newly proposed Rules of Synod**

Deputies for Revision of Synod Rules



.....  
E. Byker



.....  
C. Roose